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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 005442

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [AM](#) [CY](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR EDELMAN'S INITIAL CALL ON TURKISH  
PRESIDENT SEZER

REF: ANKARA 5419

(U) Classified by Ambassador Eric Edelman; E.O. 12958,  
reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: During Ambassador Edelman's initial call on Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer August 25, Sezer asserted the importance of the U.S.-Turkey relationship, raised Iraq, and commented on Cyprus' EU accession and Armenian genocide claims. The Ambassador stressed the importance of good U.S.-Turkey communication on Iraq, urged resolution of Cyprus before May 2004, and encouraged Turkey to open the border with Armenia. End Summary.

#### U.S.-Turkey Relations, Iraq

2. (C) Ambassador Edelman presented his credentials to Turkish President Sezer on August 29, within ten days of arrival at post. Sezer opened the one-on-one discussion by raising the importance of the U.S.-Turkey relationship, saying that the U.S. and Turkey had been good allies for a long time. Sezer acknowledged recent bilateral differences but said that these were matters that could be resolved between democratic allies.

3. (C) Ambassador noted recent incidents in northern Iraq (reftel) and said that U.S. forces were working to restore calm and prevent ethnic violence between Kurds, Turkomen and Arabs. U.S. forces had detained some of those responsible for firing shots and investigation of the incidents was continuing. There had been good bilateral communication on these issues and it was important that this continue. The Ambassador noted that Turkey had sent delegations to Iraq and said he was pleased that they had met with CPA Administrator Ambassador Bremer. Sezer did not respond, and did not comment on the issue of potential Turkish contributions to Iraq stabilization.

#### Cyprus and Armenia

4. (C) Sezer said that the EU should not have proceeded with Cyprus accession absent a settlement. Moreover, Denktas had undertaken confidence-building measures and there had been no response from the Greek Cypriot side. The Ambassador replied that it was important to look forward to settlement on Cyprus before Cyprus' accession in May 2004 and the May 2004 NATO Summit in Istanbul. The Ambassador added that December 2003 elections in Northern Cyprus would be an important milestone, it was important that they be free and fair, and we hoped that Turkey would use its influence to that end. Sezer offered no comment.

5. (C) Sezer referred to "Armenian genocide claims" coming up periodically in the U.S. Congress. The Ambassador replied that the Vice President and Secretary Powell had personally been involved when the last bill came up, but added that this was becoming more difficult to manage the longer Turkish-Armenian differences remained unresolved. Ongoing discussions between the Turkish and Armenian foreign ministries were helpful and opening the border would help manage the Armenian issue. Sezer did not respond directly, but instead in passing mentioned the importance of the upcoming U.S.-Turkish Economic Partnership Council (EPC) meeting and QIZs.

6. (C) Comment: For an initial call, Sezer spent considerable time stressing the bilateral relationship's importance. Otherwise, the meeting was vintage Sezer: little substance, and offering nothing that would move forward resolution of outstanding issues. In press reporting, President Sezer is quoted as saying that Ambassador Edelman's comments on Iraq echoed the words of President Bush when the two presidents spoke after the Bingol earthquake. End Comment.

17. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

EDELMAN